

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:
CLAYTON ET AL.

Serial No. 09/780,957

Filing Date: February 9, 2001

For: POWER GENERATOR SYSTEM HAVING
DIODE SUPPORT AND RUPTURE
CONTAINMENT DEVICE AND
ASSOCIATED METHODS

Examiner: LE, D.

Art Unit: 2834

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AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL

Director, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Responsive to the Examiner's final Office Action of
May 23, 2002, please enter the amendments and remarks set out
below.

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 3, 7, and 10 as follows:

3. (Amended) A power generation system as defined
in Claim 1, wherein the diode wheel includes a plurality of
metal-electric connection regions each having one of the
diodes connected thereto, wherein each of the plurality of
diodes includes a casing formed of an insulating material, and
wherein at least one of the pair of containment members is
positioned adjacent the metal-electric connection region
having the diode connected thereto and extends to the casing
of the diode.

7. (Amended) An exciter as defined in Claim 5,
wherein each of the pair of containment members has a

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substantially annular shape to thereby define an insulative disc.

10. (Amended) A diode support and rupture containment device as defined in Claim 8, wherein each of the pair of containment members has a substantially annular shape to thereby define an insulative disc.

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for his thorough examination of the present application. Applicants have amended Claims 3, 7, and 10 to properly recite that they depend respectively from Claims 1, 5, and 8, as the Examiner correctly assumed from Applicants' earlier cancellation of Claims 2, 6, and 9.

Applicants also express their sincere appreciation for the Examiner's graciously taking time to discuss with Applicants' attorney by phone on November 19, 2002, the basis for the Examiner's final rejection. Applicants very much appreciate the Examiner's appreciation of the patentable distinctions of the claims over the prior art. These distinctions are reiterated in the following section for the Examiner's convenience.

I. The Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claim 1 on the basis of the Nold '165 patent in view of the Moffatt '320 patent. The Examiner rejected independent Claims 5 and 8 on the basis of the Nold '165 patent in view of the Moffatt '320 patent and further in view of the admitted prior art in FIG. 4 of Applicant's specification.

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Independent Claim 1 is directed to a power generator system that includes a power generator and an exciter for excitation of the power generator. The exciter, in turn, includes a diode wheel having a rotating support structure, a plurality of diodes mounted to the structure, and a plurality of a diode support and rupture containment devices each positioned adjacent a respective one of the plurality of diodes to support the diode and contain it within the confines thereof in the event the diode ruptures. The diode support and rupture containment devices each include a pair of spaced-apart insulative containment members arranged to have a diode positioned therebetween.

Independent Claim 5 is directed to an exciter for a power generation system, the exciter including a diode support and rupture containment device that comprises a pair of spaced-apart insulative containment members arranged to have a diode positioned therebetween. Independent Claim 8 is directed to a diode support and rupture containment device for a diode of a power generation system, the diode support and rupture containment device including a pair of spaced-apart insulative containment members arranged to have a diode positioned therebetween.

The Examiner correctly acknowledged that Nold does not disclose a diode support and rupture containment device that includes a pair of spaced-apart insulative containment members with a respective diode positioned therebetween. The Examiner, however, points to Moffat, which the Examiner contends shows such a diode support and rupture containment device comprising a pair of spaced-apart containment members. Applicants respectfully assert that Moffat nowhere discloses or suggests insulative containment members as recited in each of independent Claims 1, 5, and 8.

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During the Examiner's discussion of the final rejection with Applicants' attorney, the Examiner acknowledged that Moffatt does not disclose containment members that are insulative. The Examiner, though, cited Nold's reference to an insulator 21 as part of the rectifier assembly illustrated in FIG. 1 of the Nold '165 patent.

In response, Applicants respectfully assert that the insulator 21 to which the Examiner referred is on the opposite side of a thin conductive plate 18 that separates the insulator from a diode 20. The insulator 21 does not contain the diode, and, indeed, it is separated from the diode 20 by the conductive plate 18. The insulator 21 could not possibly serve as an insulative containment member. The insulator 21 is described as serving to "sandwich a donut-like resistor 22." (Col. 3, Lines 7-8.) The resistor 22, however, is also on the other side of the conductive plate 18 and even farther away from the diode 20. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that Nold nowhere suggests providing an insulative containment member for a diode, and, therefore, the combination of Nold and Moffatt fails to produce the claimed invention.

Applicants also respectfully assert that the collet receiving ends of Moffatt that sandwich each diode are conductive rather than insulative. This is because with Moffatt an electrical connector connects to the collet receiving ends that sandwich each diode to thereby provide a rectifying bridge. It, therefore, is counter to Moffatt to sandwich each diode between containment members that are insulative. Indeed, Moffatt's purpose may well be destroyed by the employment of insulative support and rupture containment members.

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Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that there is no proper basis for the combination of Nold and Moffatt, and that, even were there a proper basis, the combination fails to produce the claimed invention. Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 5, and 8 are patentable over the prior art. In view of the patentability of Claims 1, 5, and 8, it is respectfully submitted that their dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features of the invention, are also patentable. These dependent claims require no further discussion herein.

CONCLUSION

In view of the arguments presented herein, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims are patentable. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the final rejection of the claims and issue a Notice of Allowance in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version With Markings to Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,



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